

# ***Inside Main Street***

## **News and information on Bastrop's Main Street Program September 24, 2010**

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### **What 'sleepy little town'?**

The Bastrop Main Street Program's many community partners have been running full tilt prepping for a broad array of October events. Mark your calendar and prepare to:

- **Get an earful...for two great community resources**

The Colorado River Singers will be pulling out all the stops on American jazz classics, show tunes and some gospel music in two benefit performances next month:

- Oct. 2, 7 p.m., on the grounds of the Kerr Community Center, 1308 Walnut. Monetary donations in support of the Center will be accepted. Bring your lawn chair!
- Oct. 3, 7 p.m., in the First United Methodist Church Fellowship Hall, 1201 Main. Monetary donations will go to Bastrop Emergency Food Pantry.

The concert will include featured appearances by The Bastrop Bones and Amber Snyder.

- **Offload (and find) some 'treasures'**

The Bastrop County Historical Society citywide garage sale is coming...Oct. 9 from 7 a.m. - 3 p.m. at 67 W. Loop 150 (in Colorado Crossing, next to Super Donuts).

Donated items are eligible for federal income tax deduction (receipts will be given) and will help BCHS fulfill its vision of extensively renovating and repurposing the current City Hall into a new Museum and Visitor Center. All items should be in good condition. (Please, no TVs or paint.) Unsold items will be recycled to local charities or discarded.

All donations may be dropped off at the at the garage sale site the week preceding the sale between the following hours:

Fri, Oct. 1	10 a.m. – 6 p.m.
Sat, Oct. 2	10 a.m. – 3 p.m.
Sun, Oct. 3	1 – 5 p.m.
Mon-Thurs, Oct 4-7	10 a.m. – 6 p.m.

For further information or to volunteer to assist in the garage sale, contact Lucy Todd or Barbara Vana at the BCHS Museum (303-0057).

- **Go for the absurd**

The theatre of the absurd, that is, as the Bastrop Opera House performs two one-act plays by absurdist master dramatist Eugène Ionesco: "The Bald Soprano" and "The Lesson". Directed by Don Gooding, the play will be performed at 7:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday, Oct. 8, 9, 15 and 16 with a 2:30 p.m. matinee on Sunday, Oct. 10.

The plays are classics in the absurdist tradition and, as the The Opera House website notes, turn on “illogical situations, unconventional dialogue, and minimal plots to express the apparent absurdity of human existence with the purpose of provoking thought with laughter while trying to explain a world which cannot be logically explained.”

Tickets are \$12 for adults (\$10 for those 60 and over), \$8 for high school and college students, active military and veterans; \$5 for children 14 and under. Tickets may be purchased online at [www.bastropoperahouse.com](http://www.bastropoperahouse.com).

### ■ **Get original**

Don't miss the Bastrop Fine Arts Guild's ninth annual Art on the Green—Oct. 23, between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m., on the Courthouse lawn—and a great opportunity to view and purchase original art by approximately 30 local artists. The event features only original art and its “palette” is large: paintings, drawings, sculpture, ceramics, pottery, photographs, fiber, furniture, glass, metal, woodworking, jewelry and other handmade, one-of-kind items.

### ■ **Watch for things that go bump in the night**

Thousands of ghouls, goblins, ghosts, princes and pirates will converge on downtown on Sunday, Oct. 31—between 5 and 9 p.m.—for the Downtown Business Alliance's annual Halloween Fest. So conjure a costume and get with the program:

- trick or treating with Main Street businesses, competing in the costume, pumpkin decorating, lip sync contest or “hidden images” contest,
- visiting the “live” wax museum, interactive game booths, a giant slide, a bounce house...and celebrating the return of Need for Speed's amazing Haunted House, or
- taking it all in on the Fire Department hayride.

Free to the public, this event has generated national buzz as a must-do, must-see happening and great fun for all. Activity schedules, booth and contest registration information and other details may be found at [www.bastropdba.org](http://www.bastropdba.org).

Martha Granger, this year's event co-chair with Debbie Moore, reports strong logistical support from the city and financial support from event sponsors: AT&T, Austin Skin/Dermatology, Bluebonnet Electric Coop, First National Bank of Bastrop, Frontier Bank of Texas, Walmart and Whataburger of Bastrop.

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## **Downtown developments**

- **The Green Chai**, long a favorite for lunch or refreshment is now becoming a dinner option as well, and has extended its hours to include dinner on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays. The café (at 811 Main Street) is open 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Tuesday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturdays; on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays, it will reopen between 5 and 9 p.m. Owner and artful chef Matt Barker has added new menu selections, including homemade desserts, wine and beer and is booking jazz, acoustic guitar and blues musicians for the weekend dinner hours as well. [www.greenchaicafe.net](http://www.greenchaicafe.net)
- **“Temo” Perez** has joined the - R.A. Green Mercantile (1022 Main) list of artists featured there. Temo has a growing following within the Texas arts community (and in Ohio, where

he lived before coming to Bastrop) for his color-saturated, high contrast oil and acrylic paintings and for his sculpture—creations that often draw from his interest in Aztec culture. [www.cuauhtemocperezart.com](http://www.cuauhtemocperezart.com)

- The **Old Town Postal Depot** has opened at 908 Main and provides packaging, shipping and mailing services and mail box rental and, according to owner Joe Grady Tuck, “so much more”. Also available are color copying, binding, faxing, laminating, notary services, engraving of wood, glass and metal awards, make holiday cards, wedding products, photo gifts, calendars, and poster prints.
- **Bastrop Athletic Designs**, a homegrown company that has long provided teamwear to local athletes, has grown “fast forward” to provide custom apparel to Camp Swift and in markets outside Bastrop. According to owner/operator Kathy Hernandez, the business (at 1112 Main) will continue to be known locally as Bastrop Athletic Designs but, outside Bastrop, will operate under the name (aptly) “Fast Forward Ink.” For more information on this evolving business, visit [www.bastropad.com](http://www.bastropad.com)

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## **Guild fundraising is going for the gold**

The **Bastrop Fine Arts Guild** has kicked off in a big way its campaign to fund the development of an arts complex at 1204 Chestnut, in what is now The Auto Shop. The campaign received a substantial boost from the Bastrop Economic Development Corporation on Sept. 13 as the BEDC board of directors unanimously voted to grant the Guild \$100,000 toward the purchase of the site. BEDC approval is contingent upon (1) development of a formal agreement between BEDC and the Guild regarding the project, (2) City Council’s approval of the agreement and (3) the Guild’s finalizing a purchase contract with site/business owner Clyde Clardy.

Guild board member and fundraising chair Karol Rice noted that the Guild is seeking other grants and in-kind donations and will shortly begin contacting community members regarding individual contributions.

The Guild’s vision is to preserve and repurpose this historic site, once home to Powell Oil Mill (a cotton hull, seed and oil extraction facility from the days when the Bastrop area was a major cotton producer). The 10,000 square-foot building would become a large gallery/ exhibition space, classrooms for art instruction, rental space and a specialty shop where visitors might purchase teas, wine and snacks to enjoy in an outdoor sculpture garden planned for the site. Plans also include converting a smaller building, positioned north of the larger facility, into administrative offices and repurposing the silos, also on the north, into glass, pottery, and sculpting workshops/ demonstration studios. The tallest would be converted to a studio and, with a second story efficiency apartment added, could provide accommodations for a proposed artist-in-residence program.

For further information, contact Karol at (512) 565-6912 or, Guild Board President Jeanette Condray at (512) 576-1100 and watch for updates to the Guild’s website: [www.BastropFineArtsGuild.com](http://www.BastropFineArtsGuild.com).

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## **There’s more than meets the eye with Burch project**

Preserving an old building is rewarding but often the most difficult path. Just ask Dan Hays-Clark, architectural designer on the Burch Building restoration/ rehabilitation project (930-932 Main), about the snags, surprises and joys of such work. Dan expects the “wraps” to come of the building within the next three months, and the public will get a look at how much thought, effort, time and expense has gone into the project.

The result is a building that is not only economically viable—commercial space downstairs and residences upstairs—but one that is very respectful of the building’s history. The building (930-932 Main) was built around 1865 and ranks as one of very few downtown buildings from that era. For many years the downstairs was home to Burch’s Dry Goods and Grocery Store; its new purpose will be as a gallery of fine imported rugs as well one-of-a-kind and limited edition paintings, sculpture and other fine art. The façade preserves the two entries to the building, one raised and forming the entrance to the Midland Hotel that long occupied the building’s second floor. The second floor will now contain three spacious residences.

But the real story is what went into the restoration and consumed months of behind the scenes activity:

- Consulting with preservation architects at the state and national levels to protect the buildings listing in the National Register of Historic Places and to secure federal tax credits for historic preservation of commercial structures.
- Preserving exterior walls and literally rebuilding from the inside out—from foundation to roof, from wall to wall—to create a structurally sound building that meets building codes.
- Saving and reusing where possible original building material: beams, pressed tin, woodwork and cabinetry and flooring.

Dan reports that construction is now focusing on the finishing details and the public should soon have a better sense of what promises to be a remarkable project.

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## **‘Lost Pines Christmas’ prep continues**

Local groups are hard at work on their plans for Bastrop’s “Lost Pines Christmas” weekend, Dec. 9-12...and the rich array promises to exert a powerful draw for tourists and locals alike.

At this point, more than 32 broad-interest events—produced by 17 local organizations—are in the works. The four-day weekend kicks off with a Thursday afternoon holiday open house at the new City hall (replete with a community Christmas tree, choral music and goodies) and closes with the Sunday evening Bastrop Presbyterian Fellowship Christmas Concert featuring the GraceNotes Vocal Ensemble and the *Pro Musica* Hand Bell Choir from Covenant Presbyterian Church in Austin. In between are lights, action, sights and sounds of the holiday season: plays, performance, concerts, open houses, downtown markets, nature activities, the Holiday Homes Tour, the River of Lights, the County Christmas Tree lighting, and the Lighted Christmas Parade.

This BMSP Promotions Committee initiative entails “bundling” all the activities under the Lost Pines Christmas marquee and mounting a campaign to draw distant audiences to Bastrop for the weekend. Central to making Bastrop the place to be that weekend is getting word out early to travel press and putting into play a number of strategies aimed at potential visitors—rack cards, news releases, calendar entries, billboards, paid advertising and the Internet. The

weekend will also be promoted through social media (Twitter and Facebook) and the Lost Pines Christmas website: [www.LostPinesChristmasBastropTX.com](http://www.LostPinesChristmasBastropTX.com).

As in the past, sponsors of each of the component events will continue their efforts to get out word of their event locally and to nearby communities, including Austin. For purposes of cross marketing, each event sponsor is being asked to include in their materials reference to the Lost Pines Christmas and URL of the website.

Event sponsors are invited to a special workshop on October 11 (4 p.m. at the Bastrop Opera House) to pick up more specifics on how the BMSP is getting the message out to distant audiences and how event sponsors might build on that buzz.

For further information, contact Terry Moore ([t1bmoore@hotmail.com](mailto:t1bmoore@hotmail.com)), Debbie Denny ([ddenny@bastropadvertiser.com](mailto:ddenny@bastropadvertiser.com)) or Dick Smith ([soyrps@gmail.com](mailto:soyrps@gmail.com)).

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## In the spotlight...

- The Chestnut Street Improvement Project received star billing in the August issue of *Main Street Matters*, a monthly publication of the Texas Main Street Program. The news peg was the July 17 ribbon cutting marking the completion of “Phase 2” of the project.

That phase, funded by the Bastrop Economic Development Corporation, included the replacement of utility infrastructure between Main and the railroad tracks, improvements in street lighting, sidewalks and landscaping. The work was intended to create an attractive, pedestrian friendly pathway between downtown and the new City Hall and Convention Center and to support revitalization and further development along the Chestnut Street corridor. The project included inseting in the new sidewalks 41 original bronze medallions depicting Bastrop’s rich history, bronzes designed by Clint Howard and cast at the Deep in the Heart Art Foundry.

The August issue of *Main Street Matters* can be found at [www.bastroptxmainstreet.com](http://www.bastroptxmainstreet.com). (Click the “Newsletter” button.)

- It really **IS** all about us....The November/December issue of *Texas Live* will include a 32-page spread on Bastrop, its events, charms and attractions. This slick, high quality magazine showcases the treasures of south central Texas to a readership of 78,000 per issue. It is found on newsstands statewide and is distributed to targeted audiences as an insert to the *Houston Chronicle* Sunday edition and by mail.

Credit for this coup goes to BMSP Director Nancy Wood and Bastrop Chamber of Commerce President/CEO Susan Wendel and the many local businesses that bought advertising within this special issue. For a look at the September/October issue online, visit [www.texaslivemag.com](http://www.texaslivemag.com).

- Never mind that *other* Bastrop: the New Orleans Preservation Resource Center touted the charms of two Texas Main Street cities—Georgetown and Bastrop—in the September issue of its *Preservation in Print* newsletter.

The feature showcases “two timeless Texas towns” that have been selected for field visits during the annual National Preservation Conference of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, to be held in Austin on Oct. 27-30. These sites are among two dozen options—ranging from walking excursions in downtown Austin to bus excursions to historic San Antonio sites—that provide a “close-up” view of preservation in action to conference attendees. They also represent what the National Trust selection committee sees as the “11 Most Important Places to show off to conference attendees”. Each site was carefully selected as a key demonstration of some aspect of historic preservation. The conference program describes Bastrop as “small town Texas at its best” with a restored and revitalized downtown and a community with much to offer to the heritage and nature traveler.

Conference attendees electing the Bastrop field session (mid-day Thursday, Oct. 28) will be treated to a narrated tour of the BMSP program area and the historic neighborhoods adjacent. Stops include the H. P. Lockett House, the nearby B. D. Orgain House (the newly launched Morris Mansion Bed and Breakfast Inn), the Bastrop Opera House and the refectory at Bastrop State Park.

Visit [www.preservationnation.org/resources/training/npc/program-info.html#anchoring](http://www.preservationnation.org/resources/training/npc/program-info.html#anchoring) for further information on the conference. (Registration cuts off Oct. 1!)

- Bastrop is one of 14 Texas cities to be recognized as a Texas “Certified Scenic City”, a new program developed by Scenic Texas to promote the highest levels of scenic standards for public roadways and public spaces. Scene Texas views these standards as directly correlating with a city’s economic development and the appearance of its public spaces.

Certification is based on evaluation of each city’s standards for urban design and development against a comprehensive set of model standards. In the review process, Bastrop garnered a “bronze” award.

Others recognized were (gold) Belton, Flower Mound, Georgetown and Westlake; (silver), Granbury, Keller, Mesquite and Sugar Land; (bronze) Irving, Missouri City and University Park, and (recognized) Horseshoe Bay and South Padre Island.

For further information on this program, go to [www.sceniccitycertification.org](http://www.sceniccitycertification.org).

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## **Come on in and take a seat**

Bastrop Main Street Program volunteers and other members of the public are welcome to attend any Committee and Advisory Board meeting in which they have an interest.

Meetings penciled in on the calendar thus far include:

October 4	BMSP Advisory Board, 6 p.m. in City Hall
October 13	Economic Restructuring Committee, time and place to be determined
October 21	Design Committee, 5 p.m. in City Hall
October 18	Promotions Committee, 5:30 p.m. in the Chamber of Commerce Conference
October 27	Organization Committee, noon in the Chamber of Commerce Conference Room
November 1	BMSP Advisory Board, 6 p.m. in City Hall

November 10 Economic Restructuring Committee, 5:15 p.m. in the Chamber of Commerce Conference Room  
November 15 Promotions Committee, 5:30 p.m. in the Chamber of Commerce Conference Room  
November 17 Organization Committee, noon in the Chamber of Commerce Conference Room  
November 18 Design Committee, 5 p.m. in City Hall

**Please note:** holidays and scheduling conflicts among members may prompt changes in meeting time and place. For updated information, please check with Nancy Wood at [Mainstreet@cityofbastrop.org](mailto:Mainstreet@cityofbastrop.org).

For information about upcoming community activities, consult the events calendars at [www.bastropchamber.com](http://www.bastropchamber.com) and [www.visitbastrop.org](http://www.visitbastrop.org). Advance information on upcoming events also may be posted at [www.bastropadvertiser.com](http://www.bastropadvertiser.com).

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## ***Inside Main Street...***

is an electronic newsletter to keep Bastrop Main Street Program volunteers, the business community and other interested citizens informed on program activities and to provide news on events, plans and issues affecting the 65-block BMSP area.

Produced monthly (except December), ***Inside Main Street*** is compiled and edited by BMSP volunteer Dick Smith. Feedback and suggestions welcomed: contact Dick at [soyrps@gmail.com](mailto:soyrps@gmail.com) or Nancy Wood at [Mainstreet@cityofbastrop.org](mailto:Mainstreet@cityofbastrop.org).

**Please share this newsletter** with others who have an interest in learning how the program is making a difference. Past newsletters are available online at [www.bastroptxmainstreet.com](http://www.bastroptxmainstreet.com).